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Social Relationships Shifts by Social Media in United States of America

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Abstract

Over the past two decades, social media has gained so much growth and fame worldwide to an extent that many researchers are now interested in learning more about these social platforms and their effects on social relationships in the society. The objective of this study was to establish the influence of social media on social relationships among the youth. The specific objectives were to establish the effect of social media on youth interpersonal skills, social relationships and the extent of social media use among the youth in the society. The target population of the study was the American youths in the middle class where questionnaires were administered. The study findings showed majority percent of youths agreed that there is positive impact on the use of social media because it facilitates communication and support among youths in daily life. On the negative side, the findings showed that the use of social media has sometimes led to misunderstanding and destructed relationship among youths in the society. This study recommends that youths should use social media positively in such a way that their use could not affect their social relationships. The study recommends that the youths should be careful because social media is not reliable in terms of confidentiality and privacy. Therefore, people in social relationships should be wary of self-disclosure of personal information on their social media accounts for the betterment of their social relationship.

Keywords: *Social Relationships, Social Media, Youths & United States of America.*

1.1 Introduction

In today's modern era, complete with digitization and technological advancements, social media (SM) such as online networking sites have been successfully integrated into the everyday lives of almost every individual on the planet. Social media has embedded itself in the foreground of this digitized age and has defined its place by attracting people, both the young and the old, due to their increased affordability and reach. Over the past two decades, social media has gained so much

growth and fame worldwide to an extent that many researchers are now interested in learning more about these social platforms and their effects on social relationships in the society (Cummings & Kraut, 2016).

Despite the fact that many people in the community are linked to at least one social networks system, the young people and young adults are the leading and also most fanatic of these social platforms to the point that they are on social media network every hour throughout the day (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). The popularity and growth of Social Networking Sites (SNS) has actually reinvented the way of interaction especially among young people. The principle of sociability has actually gained a renewed interest with the introduction of the social networking websites. Social interaction as well as interaction is being changed slowly by online communication. There have been numerous concerns that have been increased on the adverse as well as damaging impacts which social networking sites carry social connections of the young people in today's world. Thus, study looked for to develop the influence of social networks on the interpersonal abilities and also social connections amongst the youth.

Social network are all applications as well as websites or blog sites that enable individuals around the globe to interconnect using the internet, chat as well as share material, video telephone call among many various other capabilities it uses to its customers (Akram & Albalawi, 2016). For an individual to be a participant of any kind of social networks, they sign up and access web content where they are be able to share and talk with other individuals of that social networks platform. A few of the usual and extensively made use of social media sites platforms include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Snapchat several among others. Although social networks sites seem to link more people as well as make them stay up to date, it results in seclusion socially (Tuten & Solomon, 2017) discovers that. It lowers the variety of face-to-face interactions among the youths since they generally spend a lot of their time on these on the internet social systems.

Due to raised usage of social networking websites and also various other types of social media, there are a number of threats such as considerably decreased daily in person communications in between individuals and attracts individuals them in the direction of the digital globe of connections (Wyche, 2015). Due to very easy ease of access and also the need for pleasure principle that ends up being inherent in a specific once they signs up with a social networking website, there is very high capacity for dependency (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). The ease and convenience related to coming close to people on the internet platforms is something that cannot be reproduced in real life interactions in between people as well as thus a growing number of youth are attracted towards the suggestion of developing virtual connections on online systems (Bucher & Helmond, 2017).

Social relationships are strong bonds that we develop with our family, friends, with our teachers and in professional circle (Jin, 2015). These relationships give us the most joy and satisfaction. It is an association between two or more people that may range from fleeting to enduring. It may be based on inference, love, solidarity, regular business interactions, or some other type of social commitment. Social relationships are formed in the context of social, cultural and other influences and the context can vary from family or kinship relations, friendship, marriage, relations with associates and society (Ashida & Schafer, 2018). Depending on our ability to develop and maintain efficient social relationships with the people who matters in our life, our quality of life can also be determined.

Interpersonal skills as part of social relations are the skills we use every day when we communicate and interact with other people, both individually and in groups. Interpersonal skills include a wide variety of skills, though many are centered on communication, such as listening, questioning and understanding body language (Smith-Lovin & Heise, 2016). They also include the skills and attributes associated with emotional intelligence, or being able to understand and manage your own and others' emotions. Good interpersonal skills are often viewed as the foundation for good working and social relationships, and for developing many other areas of skill.

Social interactions and relations among the people can be evaluated and measured in terms of its frequencies of interactions (Koprowska, 2014). As how many times an interaction takes place between two persons. The more the number of interaction the more the influence on relations among them. The degree of influence depends upon the number of interaction. Duration factor measures the time spent on the interaction (DuBrin & Geerinck, 2015). One interaction ends in five minutes and the other extends up to hours. The more the time spent on interaction the more will be the influence on the interacting persons. The intensity of interaction can be measured in terms of its importance. How far it has affected the situation can be measured by its result. If the results are positive, there is intensity in the interaction and relation. Focus can also be used to evaluate the level of social interaction and relations (Cheruvellil, Soranno, Weathers, Hanson, Goring, Filstrup & Read, 2014). An interaction must have a subject matter for focusing the attention of the interacting individuals. The subject matter is common to them to form common opinion and if the subject matter is contradictory, there is little focus in the interaction (Mergel, 2013).

1.2 Problem Statement

Rapid technological advancements have led to the increased application of social networking sites that are popular among the youths. While the social network sites allow people to exchange information and ideas virtually and globally, their increased dependence on the platforms ideas has certainly led to divergent views. Previous studies by Markwei and Appiah (2016); Lupiáñez-Villanueva, Theben, Porcu and Peña-López (2018), have shown that the overdependence of the social media sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp among others) especially among the youths has a negative impact on their youth interpersonal skills and interactive space in their society. Cummings and Kraut (2016) worries that if the youths do not limit their use of social media, the future generations will have very poor social and communication skills. Various studies show that social media are helpful in interpersonal communication relationships due to the fact they enable users to connect and keep in touch with friends, mediate romantic relationships, organize into social groups, support each other and develop their own identities (Ito, 2010). An increasing number of impact brought by the social media on interpersonal communication relationships whether positive or negative in the society are contemporary issues of concerns to media and communication experts.

However studies by Siddiqui and Singh (2016); Bucher and Helmond (2017); Carpenter and Greene (2015); Cummings and Kraut (2016) observed that indeed the use of social media among the youths has enabled them improve on their skills and confidence in social relationships in the society. The various studies conducted on social media outcomes on social relationships among the youth's present divergent findings and gaps that motivate carrying out this study. Therefore, this study sought to expound on how the social media has influenced the youths interpersonal

skills, interactive space and determine to what extent the youth use social media in their relationships in society from a middle class perspective.

1.3 Research Objective

The study assessed the Social Relationships Shifts by Social Media in United States of America.

2.2 Social Penetration Theory

Psychology professors Irwin Altman and Dalmis Taylor formulated the term Social Penetration Theory in 1973, to describe the dynamics of relational closeness. Relational closeness can progress from superficial to intimate. Social penetration theory explains why relationships are formed, why they end, and the process that they undergo to prosper. Relational closeness develops through self-disclosure. Closeness will vary according to the following factors: rewards versus benefits; costs versus vulnerability; satisfaction; stability and security (Carpenter & Greene, 2015). The concept states that relationships begin and also grow via self-disclosure. Initially, individuals establish partnerships by revealing several simple, harmless truths via small talk. As partnerships expand, the rate of self-disclosure slows down while the realities divulged ended up being increasingly intimate in nature. Intimate self-disclosure permits others to penetrate a person's public persona and find his or her innermost self. Relationships stagnate when individuals entailed decline to self-disclose.

Social Penetration Theory deals with behaviors of an individual in communication with others. One person may reveal information about himself or herself to another. The information may be descriptive or evaluative, and may include: thoughts, feelings, aspirations, goals, failures, successes, fears, and dreams, as well as one's likes, dislikes, and favorites (Olson, 2013). As what couples can do in the social media as a way to cope up with the current world whether knowingly or unknowingly without regarding its impacts. Social infiltration can be contrasted to different sorts of relationships as well as to different elements of relationships. These layers are a key element of the theory. Although self-disclosure is a behavioral component of the self-penetration procedure, it consists of any kind of habits that is social spoken, non-verbal, or environmental that impacts connection development (Sprecher, Wenzel & Harvey, 2018). Social penetration concept creates predictions about the pattern of connections as they create. The concept was relevant as it clarifies why partnerships are formed, why they finish, as well as the process that they have to undergo to succeed. Better, social media sites and also partnerships can additionally be viewed as a pattern of actions in interpersonal spoken, non-verbal, or ecological that influences relationship advancement.

2.2 Literature Review

Haridakis and Hanson (2009) conducted a study on social media interaction on social connection and asserted that even though technology gives us alternate ways for how we do things, the use of internet has influenced the way we communicate with other people and how we feel about that interaction. The study established that even though technology gives us new and maybe faster ways of doing something, such as maintaining a relationship with someone, the actual methods change the way we feel about our communications with people through these new avenues. The internet and social media allow people to communicate faster and in more dynamic ways, but it might be easier for someone to ignore thinking about the consequences of his/her actions or the quality of those interactions.

Christensen (2018) conducted a study on social media use and its impact on relationships where the study sought to understand to what extent this use has impacted the users' emotional well-being and offline interpersonal relationships. A sample size of 627 participants completed a mixed-methods survey consisting of Likert scale and short answer questions regarding social media use, emotional well-being and interpersonal relationships. Results revealed that the more time an individual spent on social media the more likely they were to experience a negative impact on their overall emotional wellbeing and decreased quality in their relationships. Emotional well-being also mediated the relationship between time spent using social media and the quality of that user's relationships, meaning that the more time a person spent on social media the more likely their emotional wellbeing declined which then negatively impacted their relationships. The top three responses for negative effects of social media use on emotions were frustration, depression, and social comparison. The top three responses for negative effects of social media use on interpersonal relationships were distraction, irritation, and decreased quality time with their significant other in offline settings.

According to Kerkhof, Finkenauer and Muusses (2011), social media sites do not only impact our partnerships with others, they also impact our connection with ourselves and also exactly how we view the globe around us. The research study developed that uncontrollable Web users were lonelier; more depressed and also normally exhibited poorer social abilities than non-compulsive Net customers suggesting that these adverse characteristics were produced by their overuse of the Web. Added research disclosed that overuse of social networking sites significantly affects the lives of teenagers with unfavorable repercussions on their personal, psychosocial well-being (Marino, Vieno, Pastore, Alberty, Frings & Spada, 2016). Rosenthal, Buka, Marshall, Carey and also Clark (2016) conducted a longitudinal research study that took a look at households and their adverse experiences on Facebook. Results showed that every one of the unfavorable Facebook experiences that were determined were significantly associated with depressive symptoms.

Pittman as well as Reich (2016) clarified on the connection in between depression and also solitude by checking 253 pupils inquiring about their experiences with image-based social media systems (Instagram and Snapchat) vs. text-based social media sites systems (Twitter and SMS texting). Their findings indicated that solely image-based platforms led to a happier, a lot more pleased, much less lonesome life since images used the affection that a face-to-face discussion contains permitting the viewer to really feel a more powerful link with the circumstance existing in the picture.

One of the greatest positive adjustments in the way that we connect, because of social media networks, is the large number of individuals that we can connect with. Because of social networks networks, people are able to interact with hundreds of people around the globe. Social network networks enable people to share opinions with a far larger audience and no filter heading they speak (Dwyer, Hiltz & Passerini, 2017). Social network has additionally altered the way that we connect, primarily the way we have actually shed some of our social skills. Some people are completely unable of carrying on a normal discussion or interacting with people in person due to the reliance of social media (Lupiáñez-Villanueva, Theben, Porcu & Peña-López, 2018). Social media have become one of the leading methods we communicate.

According to Jones (2013), social networks offers human an advanced as well as hassle-free way of life. It permits them to have a benefit and also comfortable means to remain connect with their moms and dads, pals or brother or sisters. As the social media become a lot more widely used by individuals, some problems are gradually created. Individuals spend often times as well as interests

on social networking sites on a daily basis. The interaction between human has actually been reduced. Lots of people come to be uneasy with face-to-face communication. People shows that they more than depend on making use of social media to communicate with each other. This is a severe problem that people require to begin to think about it. Besides, a lot of people also make use of social media sites to conduct cyber bully. A lot of individuals come to be the sufferer of cyber bully especially children who are the main target of perpetrators. The destruction of these online strikes can leave deep mental scars for youngsters.

3.1 Methodology

The study adopted a survey descriptive design based on mixed qualitative and quantitative approach to examine the impact of social media use on youths' social relationships. Structured questions was used to capture the opinion of the respondent.

4.1 Findings and Discussions

This section presents the descriptive results social media and interpersonal skills, social media and social relationships, impact of social media use among the youth. Numbers 4 & 5 (Agree and strongly agree) were grouped together as agree, 1 & 2 (strongly disagree and disagree) were grouped as disagree while 3 was neutral.

4.2 Social Media and Interpersonal Skills

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of social media on youth interpersonal skills. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on social media on youth interpersonal skills.

Table 1: Social Media and Interpersonal Skills

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
The use of social media has affected my self confidence in the society.	6.0%	11.9%	0.0%	55.2%	26.9%	3.85	1.13
Social media has influenced my listening skills in day to day activities.	1.5%	16.4%	6.0%	53.7%	22.4%	3.79	1.02
The use of social media has scaled up my positive attitude towards life in comparison with others social media users.	3.0%	16.4%	1.5%	59.7%	19.4%	3.76	1.05
The use of social media among has enhanced personal relationship with family members.	4.5%	11.9%	0.0%	67.2%	16.4%	3.79	1.01
The use of social media has sometimes led to misunderstanding between myself and others.	10.4%	16.4%	1.5%	43.3%	28.4%	3.63	1.34
The use of social media has destructed relationship with my friends and family members.	1.5%	16.4%	1.5%	58.2%	22.4%	3.84	1.01
Average						3.74	1.11

The youths were asked whether the use of social media has affected my self confidence in the society and majority with 82% agreed with the statements while 17% disagreed. Further, the youths were asked if Social media has influenced my listening skills in day to day activities and 76.1% agreed while 17.9% disagreed. On whether the use of social media has scaled up positive attitude towards life in comparison with others social media users, majority with 79.1% agreed while only 19.4% disagreed. The youths were asked if Social media use has influenced how I communicate with others and majority agreed with 68.7% while 28.4% disagreed.

Further the youths were asked if the use of social media among has affected personal relationship with family members and they agreed with 83.6% while 16.45 disagreed to the statement. In addition the youths were asked if the use of social media has sometimes led to misunderstanding between myself and others and they agreed with 71.7% and 26.8% disagreed. Lastly the youths were asked if the use of social media has destructed relationship with my friends and family members and 80% agreed while 17.9% disagreed.

Various responses were given by the youths on social media and interpersonal skills. Some of the responses were;

“The use of social media has affected me in both a positive and negative perspective. It has boosted my active listening and deteriorated responsibility as a lot of time is consumed in social media”.

“Social media has not affected their interpersonal skills and they would rather get online than do things that are not interesting to them”.

Others responded that;

“Social media has affected me negatively as to my communication skills whereby I don’t listen well when am being talked to”.

“Social media has affected they have affected them in that they have engaged them to liking of female friends”.

Some of the ways social media has impacted the youths were;

“I have adopted a carefree attitude because I only use social media that suites my mood and frequently ignoring boring but useful platforms”.

“Social media has enabled me to air out my views pertaining certain topics and has greatly boosted my self-confidence and how I interact with others”.

4.3 Social Media and Social Interactions

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of social media on social interactions. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on social media on youth social relationships.

Table 2: Social Media and Social Interactions

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
I am able to control and navigate social situations with composure.	6.0%	20.9%	0.0%	50.7%	22.4%	3.63	1.217
I am able to communicate freely with the youths and the elderly.	6.0%	22.4%	3.0%	50.7%	17.9%	3.52	1.198
I am able to maintain personal and healthy relationship with family members.	4.5%	17.9%	0.0%	64.2%	13.4%	3.64	1.069
I am able to monitor my friends and colleagues in our social activities.	1.5%	26.9%	0.0%	53.7%	17.9%	3.6	1.115
I am open to feedback and positive criticism.	7.5%	20.9%	1.5%	44.8%	25.4%	3.6	1.28
I get along with other students and teachers/lectures while at school.	4.5%	26.9%	3.0%	46.3%	19.4%	3.49	1.211
I am able to raise concerns and issues and issues that affect me appropriately.	4.5%	22.4%	3.0%	47.8%	22.4%	3.61	1.193
Average						3.58	1.18

The youths were asked if they are able to control and navigate social situations with composure and majority agreed with 73.1% while 26.9% disagreed. The youths were further asked if they are able to communicate freely with the youths and the elderly and they agreed with 68.6% while 28.4% disagreed. In addition they were asked if they are able to maintain personal and healthy relationship with family members and 77.6% agreed and 22.4% disagreed. On whether they are able to monitor my friends and colleagues in our social activities, 71.6% agreed while 28.4% disagreed.

Further the youths were asked if they are open to feedback and positive criticism and 70.2% agreed while 28% disagreed. On whether they get along with other students and teachers/lectures while at school, 65.7% agreed while 31.4% disagreed. Lastly the youths were asked if they are able to raise concerns and issues and issues that affect me appropriately and 70.2% agreed while 26.9% disagreed.

Various responses were given by the youths on social media and social interactions. Some of the responses were;

“it has created a sense of fear and simultaneously confidence. In fear some of the issues easily addressed on social media cannot be tackled face to face. Confidence in that social media has created a platform where I can freely address issues that are disturbing me without fear of the feedback expected”.

On matters of social media and social life, response were given that;

“Social media has created a wide platform of communicating and addressing issues as opposed to physically carrying out the activities”.

Another response from the youth was that;

“It has made me more open with my family and friends”.

4.4 Extent of Social Media Use

The objective of the study was to establish the extent of social media. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on extent of social media.

Table 3: Extent of social media

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
I log in to social media platforms on daily basis.	4.5%	20.9%	1.5%	41.8%	31.3%	3.75	1.24
I use more time on social media than physically with my family and friends.	1.5%	34.3%	4.5%	46.3%	13.4%	3.36	1.14
I spend significant of my resources on social media networks.	10.4%	16.4%	1.5%	43.3%	28.4%	3.63	1.34
I forego some of my planned activities so I can spend more time on social media	1.5%	16.4%	1.5%	58.2%	22.4%	3.84	1.01
Social media has improved communication in and outside the school.	6.0%	20.9%	0.0%	50.7%	22.4%	3.63	1.22
Social networks make it easy for me to talk to someone I have never met before.	6.0%	22.4%	3.0%	50.7%	17.9%	3.52	1.20
Social networks enable me to remain connected with my family and friends.	4.5%	17.9%	0.0%	64.2%	13.4%	3.64	1.07
Average						3.62	1.17

The youths were asked if they log in to social media platforms on daily basis and 73.1% while 25.4% disagreed. They were further asked if they use more time on social media than physically with family and friends and they agreed with 59.7% while 35.8% disagreed. On whether they spend significant of resources on social media networks 71.7% agreed and 26.8% disagreed. They were also asked if they forego some of planned activities so they can spend more time on social media 80% agreed while 17% disagreed.

Further the youths were asked if Social media has improved communication in and outside the school and 73% agreed while 26% disagreed. On whether Social networks make it easy for to talk to someone they have never met before, 68% agreed while 28 disagreed. Lastly they were asked if Social networks enable me to remain connected with my family and friends and 77% agreed while 22% disagreed. Various responses were given by the youths on extent of social media use. Some of the responses were;

“I spend a huge amount of time on social media for entertainment, communication, researching and for studying”.

On addition to social media use, some of the responses were that;

“I always create time to use social media but I ca also do without social media”.

“Yes am addicted to social media because I spend a great deal of time in social media and feel better.

“I use it all the time, Immediately I wake up, during the day and at night”.

4.5 Social Relationships

The study sough to establish the social relationships of the youths. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on their social relationships.

Table 4: Social Relationships

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
Social networks have helped me maintain contacts with old friends and create new friends.	1.5%	26.9%	0.0%	53.7%	17.9%	3.6	1.115
Social networks have increased my social knowledge on the society.	10.4%	16.4%	1.5%	43.3%	28.4%	3.63	1.335
I have been able to interact with my family and friends despite use of social media.	1.5%	16.4%	1.5%	58.2%	22.4%	3.84	1.009
I am able to solve disputes and conflicts responsibly in the society.	6.0%	20.9%	0.0%	50.7%	22.4%	3.63	1.217
Social media skills have made me to be physically social to my friends and relatives.	1.5%	26.9%	0.0%	53.7%	17.9%	3.6	1.115
Average						3.64	1.15

The youths were asked if Social networks have helped me maintain contacts with old friends and create new friends and 71.6% agreed while 28.4% disagreed. On whether Social networks have increased my social knowledge on the society, they agreed with 71.7% while 26.8% disagreed. They were asked if they have been able to interact with my family and friends despite use of social media and 80% agreed while 18% disagreed. On whether they are able to solve disputes and conflicts responsibly in the society, 73% agreed while 26% disagreed.

Further the youths were asked if Social media interactions have enabled me to make informed social decisions and 68.6% agreed while 28.4% disagreed. On whether Social media improves my communication skills with my peers, they agreed with 77.6% while 22.4% disagreed. Lastly, they were asked if Social media skills have made me to be physically social to my friends and relatives and 71.6% agreed while 28% disagreed.

Various responses were given by the youths on social relationships. Some of the responses were; *"I am up to date with the current trends in communication, entertainment and research. On social media I can also buy goods/ services, scan for scholarships or job opportunities"*.

Regarding how social media has affected social relationships, responses were that;

"It has boosted relationships as they freely tackle every social issue they face easily and effectively. They also address their problems and look for solutions".

4.6 Social Media and Social challenges

The literature in the study had showed that there was a varied outcomes on the social outcomes related to social media use. The study conducted interviews where the respondents were asked what social challenges social media pose to the youth.

The responses were that;

"It has facilitated fake lives, most youths just copy what they see in social media without knowing the expenses or even the challenges".

In addition,

"Social media has caused addiction where most youth are addicted to social platforms for the wrong reasons. The youth may get addicted to it. They may spend more of their time in the social media. Therefore time that should have been used in productivity is wasted".

As a result of social media use, cultural erosion due to western influence, our African morals and beliefs are eroded. Social media has perfected the arts of having too many fake friends, cyber bullying which is associated with depression, anxiety and an elevated risk of suicidal thoughts. Further, social media has placed physical talents and activities in jeopardy. Lack of physical commitment and laziness have increasingly become the norm among the youth, as they tend to be in one sitting and maintain social interactions. In addition, social media has some websites where it just has pornographic videos that influence youths mind and make them immoral.

However some respondents were of different opinion that;

“I do not think challenges are posed to the youth because social media is a public platform and it forces them to be responsible about what they post”.

5.1 Conclusion

Generally, the study’s findings showed majority percent of youths agreed that there is positive impact on the use of social media because it facilitates communication and support among youths in daily life. On the negative side, the findings showed that the use of social media has sometimes led to misunderstanding and destructed relationship among individuals in the society. This research study validates previous research study on usages and also satisfaction theory, social networks results, and relationship problems, but additionally supplies extra data that perhaps takes past study beyond previous restrictions to display that social media sites play a role in creating addicting habits. It is extremely feasible that social media sites are creating a culture of addicts. This may call for taking a break from social media for a short while and also taking supply of our lives in order to much better see what needs social media sites has actually been pleasing and afterwards to make the choice of either continuing to make use of social media sites to fill up those requirements to or to discover different resources of gratification that are a lot more enduring.

6.1 Recommendations

This study suggests that youths should use social media positively in such a way that their use could not affect their social relationships. The study recommends that the youths should be careful because social media are not reliable in terms of confidentiality and privacy. Therefore, people in social relationships should be aware with self-disclosure of personal information on their social media accounts for the betterment of their social relationship. The use of social media itself predicts that there is both positive and negative relationship between the use of social media and the social interactions. The study recommends that the youths are primarily responsible causative agent of a healthy relationship and not otherwise.

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